

Docket No.: **LT-0009**

PATENT

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF APPEALS AND INTERFERENCE**

In re Application of

Confirmation No.: **5026**

Seong Jin JO

Group Art Unit: **3621**

Serial No.: **10/029,240**

Examiner: **Bradley B. Bayat**

Filed: **December 28, 2001**

Customer No.: **34610**

For: **METHOD OF MANAGING USE OF AN APPLIANCE THROUGH A
COMMUNICATION NETWORK**

REPLY BRIEF

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Customer Window, **MAIL STOP APPEAL BRIEF-PATENTS**
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, Virginia 223134

Sir:

In support of the Appeal currently pending for the above-identified application, and in reply to the Examiner's Answer Brief issued January 25, 2008, Applicant provides the following comments and arguments.

Applicant agrees that paragraphs 2350-2354 of the Ginter publication appear to disclose receiving some type of information about use of an appliance via a network, and charging a consumer for such use. Ginter also appears to disclose shutting down an appliance if the user is unable to provide appropriate verification/identity information. However, the Examiner has failed to show that the Ginter publication discloses or suggests all the features of the pending claims.

Likewise, the Kuroda reference fails to disclose or suggest key features recited in the claims. Applicant agrees that the Kuroda reference discloses a remote monitoring system which can monitor usage conditions and error conditions reported from a plurality of laundry machines located at a laundry facility. However, it is important to note that in the Kurodo system, each of the individual washing and drying machines located within a laundry facility are individually controlled by their own internal microcomputer. Kuroda discloses that the laundry machines may report various items of usage, money collection and/or error data to a central authority.

However, in the Kuroda system, no control is exerted over the laundry machines from the central authority. Kuroda consistently states that the microcomputer within each individual washing and drying machine controls operation of the laundry machine. See for instance, column 1, lines 29-30; column 3, lines 61-66; and column 4, lines 10-12.

In addition, Kuroda fails to disclose or suggest using the reported information to calculate any charges for use of the laundry machines. Instead, users of the laundry machines deposit coins into the machines in order to use the machines. More importantly, Kuroda fails to disclose or suggest a system wherein a central authority receives the specific types of usage data recited in the claims, nor that any such usage data is used by a central authority to calculate charges. Kuroda also fails to disclose or suggest exerting any sort of control over the laundry machines from a central authority.

It is respectfully submitted that each of the independent claims recites features which are

not disclosed or suggested by either Ginter or Kuroda. The specific features missing in the prior art are discussed separately below for each of the independent claims.

CLAIM 1

Claim 1 is directed to a method of managing use of a rental home appliance. As discussed in the Appeal Brief, claim 1 includes a step of transmitting a calculated charge to a user's terminal through the communication network. Nothing in the Ginter publication discloses or suggests transmitting a calculated charge for use of a home appliance to a user's terminal. The Kuroda reference fails to cure this deficiency of Ginter. For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-7 are allowable.

In addition, the dependent claims recite additional features which are also not disclosed or suggested by Ginter or Kuroda. For instance, claim 3 recites a step of receiving at least one of a variety of different types of home appliance use information. Ginter and Kuroda fail to disclose or suggest an apparatus or a method wherein any of the items of information recited in claim 3 are received by a central authority or used by the authority to calculate a charge for use of the appliance.

In addition, claim 4 recites that the appliance is activated by a start signal from a registered subscriber's personal computer or mobile terminal. Nothing in Ginter or Kuroda discloses or suggests this feature.

It is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are also allowable for these additional reasons.

CLAIM 8

Claim 8 is also directed to a method of managing use of a rental home appliance. Claim 8 recites a step of transmitting a start signal for a rental home appliance to a corresponding subscriber's terminal if the subscriber number is authenticated successfully. Claim 8 also recites transmitting a calculated charge to the subscriber's terminal through the communications network. Neither Ginter nor Kuroda disclose or suggest these features of claim 8. For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8-14 are allowable. The dependent claims are also allowable for the additional features which they recite.

CLAIM 15

Claim 15 is directed to a method of managing use of a washing machine through a communication network. Claim 15 recites receiving information on washing condition program settings through the communication network. Claim 15 also recites transmitting a calculated charge to a user's terminal through the communication network. Neither Ginter nor Kuroda disclose or suggest these steps. For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that claims 15-18 are allowable. The dependent claims are also allowable for the additional features which they recite.

CLAIM 19

Claim 19 is directed to a method of managing use of a rental home appliance. Claim 19 includes a step of receiving automatically selected information on rental home appliance use conditions through the communications network. Claim 19 also recites transmitting a calculated charge to the subscriber's terminal through the communication's network. Neither Ginter nor Kuroda disclose or suggest these steps of claim 19. For at least this reaction, it is respectfully submitted that claims 19-22 are allowable. The dependent claims are also allowable for the additional features which they recite.

CLAIM 23

Claim 23 is also directed to a method of managing usage of a rental home appliance. Claim 23 includes a step of configuring a rental home appliance for use if a received subscriber number has been validated. Claim 23 also recites transmitting charge information to a user. Ginter and Kuroda fail to disclose or suggest these features of claim 23. For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that claims 23-29 are allowable.

In addition, the dependent claims recite additional features which are also not shown by Ginter or Kurodo. For instance, claims 25 recites transmitting said charge information to a user before a subscriber has used the appliance. Claim 26 depends from 25 and further recites canceling use of said of appliance after transmitting said charge information to said user and before the subscriber has used the appliance. Together, claims 25 and 26 describe a method wherein a user is able to determine if a calculated charge for use of the appliance is too great. If the charge is too great, the user can cancel usage of the appliance before the usage has begun. It

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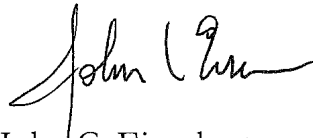
is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are also allowable for these additional reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-29 are allowable.

Prompt and favorable action on the Appeal is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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